

Citizen Corps PROGRAMS

Community Emergency Response Team Training (CERT) Program (FEMA/USFA) Prepares civilians to organize and train for disasters; develops partnerships between local government, response agencies and emergency management, and community members. www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert

Medical Reserve Corps (DHHS) Coordinates a volunteer cadre of practicing and retired health professionals, physicians, nurses, and others with relevant medical skills for assistance to fire and EMS during large-scale local emergencies; serves vital role by assisting communities with ongoing public health needs. www.medicalreservecorps.gov

Volunteers in Police Service and Neighborhood Watch Program (DOJ) Provides a unique infrastructure that brings together local officials/law enforcement with citizens to protect communities. www.policevolunteers.org and www.usaonwatch.org

Citizen Corps Councils The Citizen Corps mission will be accomplished through a national network of state, local, and tribal Citizen Corps Councils. These Councils provide the local first responders an opportunity to work with volunteer organizations, local community leaders, and other local groups to get their community better prepared to handle any type of disaster or crisis situation.



FEMA'S National Emergency Training Center is the site for dozens of classes, including sessions that train Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) leaders from across the country.

The **Citizen Corps** mission is to tailor activities to the community and build on community strengths to develop and implement a local strategy of having every American participate through:

- 1. Personal Responsibility.** Developing a household preparedness plan and disaster supplies kits, observing home health and safety practices, implementing disaster mitigation measures, and participating in fire/crime prevention and reporting.
- 2. Training.** Taking classes in emergency preparedness, response capabilities, first aid, CPR, fire suppression, and search and rescue procedures.
- 3. Volunteer Service.** Engaging individuals in volunteer activities that support first responders, disaster relief groups, and community safety organizations.

Go to the web site www.citizencorps.gov to learn more about Citizen Corps and how you can start or participate in a state or local Council.

USFA is an active partner of Citizen Corps and the Councils are a great way for the fire community to get citizen volunteers engaged in promoting fire safety and prevention!

Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Fire Administration
www.citizencorps.gov
www.usafreedomcorps.gov
www.usfa.fema.gov
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Citizen Corps

Opportunities for America's

First Responders



FEMA

The **Citizen Corps** initiative encourages Americans to better prepare their families, neighborhoods, and communities -- **and** to consider offering assistance to first responders involved in fire, rescue, emergency medical services (EMS), and law enforcement.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, all Americans were called upon by President George W. Bush to dedicate at least 4,000 hours in service to others. He launched the USA Freedom Corps initiative to inspire and enable Americans to find ways to serve.

Citizen Corps is the component of USA Freedom Corps that creates opportunities for individuals to volunteer in helping their communities prepare for and respond to emergencies by bringing together local leaders, citizen volunteers, and the network of first responder organizations, such as fire, EMS, and police departments.

Our Federal Government appropriates millions of dollars each year promoting volunteerism. Already existing are various corps that have achieved great success. From a fire, rescue, and EMS perspective, many of these encourage citizen volunteer support of the first responder community.

The mission of **Citizen Corps** is to harness the power of every individual through personal responsibility, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to emergencies and disasters of all kinds, including threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, etc., especially during major events when response agencies may be overwhelmed initially.

Citizen Corps is adapted to each community and managed at the local level by a Citizen Corps Council, or similar entity, comprised of leaders from the first responder and emergency management community, volunteers, community services, faith- and community-based organizations, educational

institutions, medical facilities, business and industry, and community neighborhood networks.

BENEFITS TO FIRST RESPONDERS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

Having citizens who are better prepared to take care of themselves and others during times of crisis allows first responders to focus their efforts on the most critical, life-threatening situations. Everyone can do something to support local fire, emergency medical services, community public health efforts, law enforcement, and the four stages of emergency management -- preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts.

There are many tasks that a well-trained, organized group of citizen volunteers can perform on an ongoing basis. Suggestions and recommendations gathered from the Nation's own firefighters include

- Assist with public relations.
- Assist with maintenance of emergency vehicles.
- Enter statistical data; assist with analysis of fire incident reporting.
- Assist with analysis of EMS demands.
- Assist with youth programs and youth mentoring services.
- Develop computer programs, design/improve Web sites.
- Assist with typing reports, answering telephone calls, managing records, and other office tasks.
- Develop informational newsletters to include holiday or seasonal-oriented fire injury prevention messages.
- Conduct research through fire and rescue information sources.
- Assist with fire and EMS fundraising initiatives.
- Compile fire/rescue data about specific fire safety challenges/successes.
- Assist with fire prevention education programs.
- Distribute information on fire, rescue, and EMS.

- Assist with injury prevention awareness programs and safety fairs.
- Offer to serve in a department's auxiliary.
- Assist with foreign language translation of safety literature.
- Assist with canteen services at major incidents.
- Assist with special events like Fire Prevention Week, and annual fire and life safety open houses.
- Conduct followup customer surveys on fire and EMS services provided.
- Offer to develop or enhance existing advertising campaigns, and market new/upgraded services.
- Assist with hard-to-reach, at-risk audiences to improve fire and life safety.
- Assist with development of historical archives, antique equipment restoration, and museum services.
- Help to improve understanding of specialized fire/EMS organizational services like hazardous materials response, urban search and rescue (USAR), youth services, water/mountain rescue, billing services, etc.
- Organize community-based fire/EMS personnel appreciation events.
- Assist with development and maintenance of fire department libraries via labeling, cataloging, inventorying, text repairing, etc.
- Assist fire departments with community programs, such as roadside cleanup, food drives, and toy collections for families in need.
- Help with "Adopt a Fire Hydrant" programs to maintain hydrant accessibility (removal of snow, high weeds, bushes, shrubs).
- Assist with mitigation measures: wildland vegetation removal near structures, identifying unknown hazards, etc.
- During times of heightened national security alerts, assist in planning for quick access to stocks of emergency supplies, shelter readiness, and procedures review.